

OFFICE OF BROWNFIELD REMEDIATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OBRD)
MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM – ROUND 15
ASSESSMENT-ONLY GRANTS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FEBRUARY 25, 2022

Please make note to check the FAQ Addendum that will be posted on Mon, Mar 28, 2022.

1. What is the maximum and minimum amount that an eligible entity can apply for this round of the Municipal Grant Program?

- The maximum and minimum amount that any entity can apply for any project is \$200,000 and \$100,000, respectively. However, Councils of Governments (COG) and Brownfield Land Banks (BLB) can apply for multiple projects under a particular application submission, for a total of up to \$500,000. The projects can be within one municipality or span multiple municipalities.

2. Can an entity submit multiple applications?

- Yes, all applicants are welcome to submit multiple projects under separate applications. Municipalities can also submit for multiple unrelated sites under one application as long as the total request for the project is within the specified thresholds (minimum of \$100K and maximum of \$200K). The applicant should however be able to demonstrate that it has the capacity to handle and complete the work in a timely manner.

3. The Application Form has limited space to provide the required information for all projects and sites for an application proposal from a COG or BLB? How should we handle this limitation?

- COGs and BLBs can utilize the Application Summary Cover Sheet to describe the individual requests and feel free to submit multiple Application Forms for each of the sub-projects proposed in its Application.

4. Why is DECD/OBRD providing COGs and BLBs the option to apply for up to \$500K?

- This option will help out smaller municipalities that may not have the capacity to apply to the program.
- It will help DECD maintain a single contract (Assistance Agreement) with one entity for multiple projects with similar scope rather than multiple contracts with smaller amounts.

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5. Will the application from a COG or BLB be scored on the collective merit of all the sub-projects that are proposed?

- No, each of the sub-projects will be scored separately so that each of the proposed projects will stand on its own merit.

6. Can I apply for a Remediation grant in this round?

- No, we are not offering a remediation grant under Round 15.

7. In preparation for Round 15, I already filled out the application forms that were available on the Website under Round 13 – Assessment-only Grant. Can I proceed to submit the same under Round 15?

- No, the forms have changed for this round. Please make sure that you use the new Application Form to submit the Round 15 project application. Main changes:
 - There is only one combined application form with two separate sections - Part A: Threshold Eligibility Section and Part B: Project Details. Part A and Part B mirror the pre-application and application step from Round 13. In Round 15, the application form (both parts) will need to be submitted at the same time.
 - There are other changes which is an improvement on the previous forms.

8. What does the Part A: Threshold Eligibility Section of the Application Form cover?

The following threshold items are covered under Part A of the Application Form. An Applicant or Application may be denied funding after review of Part A of the Application Form.-

- Proof that the site is a brownfield as per [C.G. S. Sec. 32-760](#)
- Proof that the Applicant and potential development partners have no direct or related liability for the conditions of the brownfield.
- Proof that Applicant has access or will have access to the property, site control or path to site control
- Proof that the potential development partner is registered to do business in the State of CT and is in good standing – no pending lawsuits, liens filed and tax arrears.

9. Where do I access the forms and how can I submit my application?

- The forms can be accessed at the Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development (OBRD) Website (www.ctbrownfields.gov). Under Explore Funding Opportunities, please click on the [Brownfield Municipal Grant Program](#) Page.
- Email all completed forms to brownfields@ct.gov.

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- Larger attachments that cannot be sent via email, can be shared via a cloud-share link (such as Dropbox) to the above listed address, provided it does not require DECD staff to create a new account to access the files.
- If you do not have a cloud-share link, please contact brownfields@ct.gov and a secure sharefile-folder (cloud-based provision) will be sent to you, where you will be able to upload the files.

10. Who are the eligible entities who can apply for the program?

- A Municipality as defined by [C.G.S Section 32-760 \(12\)](#); Economic Development Agency, as defined by [C.G.S Section 32-760 \(6\)](#); and Connecticut Brownfield Land Banks, as defined by [C.G.S Section 32-760 \(22\)](#). Entities responsible for the contamination are ineligible. Economic Development Agencies should provide articles of incorporation to prove eligibility. All applicants must provide proof of access to the site, site control or path to site control. It may be noted that DECD is encouraging eligible entities to partner with private entities/developers to submit the applications. Remediation-redevelopment partnerships can help arrive at cost-effective remediation solutions.

11. Are councils of government eligible entities to apply for the Municipal Grant Program?

- Yes, regional councils of government are eligible entities that can apply for the Municipal Grant Program. C.G.S. Section 32-763 lists economic development agencies as eligible entities to apply for the Municipal Grant Program. The definition of economic development agencies in C.G.S. Sec 32-760 (6) includes “ ... (D) an agency, as defined in section 32-327. C.G.S Sec. 32-327 defines “Agency” as “... any regional council of governments organized under sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, ...”

12. Can a municipality (or other eligible-entity) apply for an assessment grant under the program for a privately-owned property?

- A municipality can apply for an assessment grant for a privately-owned brownfield property as long as the owner enters into an access agreement with the municipality to perform the assessment or remediation work. At a minimum, a letter of intent from the private property owner that an access agreement will be entered into with the applicant once the grant award is made, should be included as part of the application. All reports and data produced with the grant funds would be state and municipal property.

13. Are Town-owned brownfields eligible for the program or is it only limited to privately-owned properties?

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- Town-owned brownfield properties as well as privately-owned properties are eligible for the Municipal Grant Program. See above Question/Response with regards to privately-owned properties.

14. One of the private partners and the owner of the property is the Certifying Party as per the Transfer Act. Will the application be automatically denied at the pre-application stage?

- C.G.S. Sec. 32-763 requires the DECD Commissioner to consider several criteria while reviewing applications and making funding decisions including the relationship of the applicant to the person or entity that caused the contamination. Involvement of the Certifying Party in the application to the DECD will not be an automatic disqualifier if there is proof that the Certifying Party is not actually the person or entity that caused the contamination but rather assumed the responsibility for the contamination via the requirements of the Transfer Act. The burden of proof, however, lies on the Applicant to provide to the DECD that the entity has not caused the contamination or has not willfully continued with operations that caused additional contamination after taking up ownership of the property. The DECD Commissioner reserves the right to approve or deny an application on a case-by-case basis.

15. What criteria will DECD be using to score and award funds?

- Please see the NOFA for details on the criteria that DECD will be using to score and award the funds. But more generally, some of the criteria that will be considered are: clarity on assessment needs, economic and community development impact, locational benefits and merits, level of non-DECD support and applicant experience. The Application Form, we believe, is mostly straightforward and self-explanatory. The key to a good application is providing clear responses to the questions asked or providing the information/documents that have been requested.

16. What are the criteria that need to be satisfied to be termed as a Brownfield, so the project is eligible to be funded under the Program?

- C.G.S. Sec 32-760 defines Brownfield as “any abandoned or underutilized site where redevelopment, reuse or expansion has not occurred due to the presence or potential presence of pollution in the buildings, soil or groundwater that requires investigation or remediation before or in conjunction with the redevelopment, reuse or expansion of the property.” DECD will be making sure that the proposed project meets the statutory definition of a brownfield. Projects proposed on sites that do not meet the statutory definition of a brownfield will not be considered for funding. Some aspects that DECD will consider in determining whether a site meets the statutory definition of a brownfield include, but are not limited to

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whether the property is abandoned or underutilized and whether the presence or potential presence of pollution is the primary obstacle preventing the site from being redeveloped, reused or expanded, given the condition of the site. Entities responsible for the contamination on a site are ineligible to apply for a brownfield project on that site.

17. If I am successful in receiving the grant, when is the project start date? When can I start the work and will I be reimbursed for work immediately?

- The project start date will be the date of the award letter from DECD. All eligible expenses from that day are reimbursable. Contracts for the reimbursable work will need to be put in place after obtaining DECD approval and contractors/consultants will need to be selected as per DECD guidelines. No funds can be reimbursed until a DECD Assistance Agreement (Contract) is put in place.

18. A consultant is helping me with the application for this grant. Can the consultant get reimbursed from this grant?

- No, consultant services hired by an Applicant prior to the grant award are not eligible for reimbursement from the grant. Also, preparation of an application to DECD is not an eligible expense.

19. Do you anticipate that there will be another round in the near future?

- Yes, OBRD expects to announce Round 16 in July/August of 2022. This round will be for remediation/limited-assessment funding.

20. Is a Phase I mandatory for the submission?

- No, a Phase I is not mandatory for the Assessment-only grant application but a submission that includes a Phase I ESA will be more likely to score better.

21. The space provided in the application forms is limited. Please can I provide an attachment with additional information to respond to the questions?

- DECD encourages all applicants to be as succinct as possible with their responses to the questions in the application forms. DECD will only accept responses to the questions included in the space provided within the forms. Material presented outside of the forms may not be reviewed. Incomplete applications will be rejected. The response fields have been restricted to include a limited number of characters. If your response text does not appear within the visible response box, then a portion of your response may be cut off when the form is signed. Please adjust your answers so that all text is visible once the document is signed.

22. I have a question that is not covered above. How can I get a response?

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- Please feel free to send any questions you may have to brownfields@ct.gov (preferred) or contact the dedicated OBRD hotline number at 860.500.2395. All responses to questions not included in this document will also be posted on the OBRD website (as an addendum) by Monday, March 28, 2022.

23. What is the due date to submit the application form and when can I hear back about award decisions?

- Please see the NOFA for the detailed schedule. All grant full-application forms should be submitted by 3:00 PM on Friday, April 22, 2022. Please note that DECD **will** accept submissions prior to this deadline. Please make sure you receive a receipt of application notice from OBRD staff.
- DECD hopes to make the grant award announcements in May-June 2022.